2: Stefansson--79-80 (1908-1912) 1914 Copper Eskimo
116, 493, 398

"A few sleds in the Straits and as far east as Rae River are shod with whalebone in the usual Eskimo way, strips of bone cut lengthwise from the bone of the lower jaw (inferior maxillary bone) of a bowhead whale. Generally, however, the shoeing of a sled is as follows:

The runner to begin with, is a spruce wood plank about one and a half inches thick and twelve or fourteen inches high. To the bottom of this is pegged with round wooden pegs a thin strip of wood, the width of the runner. This strip is of as decayed and 'fuzzy' a kind as is obtainable, a piece of half decayed driftwood is preferred. In the fall, when the sled is to be used sod is cut in strips as long as convenient and about three inches thick and four inches wide. Lengthwise, along the flat side of these is cut a groove the width of the sled runner and the sod is put under the runners as shoeing. With a little water these are securely frozen to the bottom of the runners, the fuzz of the half-decayed wood holding them securely. The bottom of the runners is then rounded off with an adze or knife so the sod takes the form of a longitudinally bisected cylinder. The last touch is given by turning the sled upside down and washing over the sod runners with a little water to give them a one-tenth inch coating of ice. This ice coat is inspected every day of travel and repaired when necessary; the sod shoeing usually lasts a whole winter without special attention being paid to it. In spring when the sun shines warm a skin is hung loosely over the sunward side of the sled to shield the runners when traveling from the direct rays of the sun, and at camp time, the sleds are buried in snow to

keep the sod shoeing from dropping off and the ice coat on its bottom from melting. In various places I have seen different ways of applying ice to the shoeing of sleds but none seems so satisfactory as this, at least, none are so well adapted to use on rough ice or stony ground. Ice is no doubt the best form of shoeing ever devised for sledging at low temperatures. We have seen sleds thus shod carrying a thousand pounds and more of load traveling at the rate of two miles an hour hauled by one man, one woman, and two dogs. [80] Traveling in the same company we had some difficulty keeping up with the party with six good dogs and two men hauling six hundred pounds on a steel shod sled such as is now used by all Eskimo west of Baillie Islands. Steel has many advantages and is the best all-round shoeing in spring and fall but it grates on the snow as on sand when used at temperatures prevalent in the Arctic from December to April. Ice is the best possible shoeing for low temperatures, it most nearly eliminates friction."

2: Stefansson--226
493, 117

(1908-12) 1914

Copper Eskimo

"May 2. En Route to Coronation Gulf. Sleds. On seeing accidentally the picture of a 'kutchin' sled in the frontispiece of Richardson's 'Second Journey' Pan. and Billy both said it was like a Kuwûrmiut sled, P. said 'just like'; Billy said he had seen most of them with the rear end a little lower in the runner bend than the front end. He has owned one sled bought in the Kuwûk 'for a rifle, when rifles were yet valuable.' It was longer than any sled he has seen at Herschel, though some of them must be sixteen or eighteen feet long. Kuwûk sleds never had shod runners, neither did they, he says, ever shoe them with ice or ice them even slightly. The runners were of ūrūrrĭ-lĭk, or canoe birch. It was the best sled he ever used for snow, but very poor crossing ice."

2: Stefansson--227
493, 117

(1908-12) 1914

Copper Eskimo

"May 4. West of Point De Witt Clinton. Sled. Billy improvised out of the bearskin a sled of a type new to me, except from hearsay. He merely laced it into a bag and attached the bag by the head-skin to the rear end of our sled. On level snow its two hundred pound weight can be pulled by a small dog; on glare ice it is a bit sticky; in rough going its weight comes in play, of course. To have this behind the sled rather than on it may or may not increase the average hauling weight, but it is a convenient way, and I am afraid of two hundred pounds more on the sled, a breakdown would be serious."

2: Stefansson--245
493, 117

(1908-12) 1914

Copper Eskimo

"Sleds. The sleds are not of the short Mackenzie and Baillie type though Prince Albert sleds said by Mogg to be short as early Mackenzie. All the old sled pieces we found on Parry and one or two found east of Lyon were the short type. One measured, an average one, was ten feet one inch long, nineteen inches wide, inside measure, about ten inches high, with eight cross-pieces lashed on. They are rudely made of driftwood, and as many were new, I conclude they are frequently discarded and new ones made. Shoeing of moss and ice. I did not want to ask to see it, as all sleds carefully buried to within about two inches of top, to protect ice runners from chance thaw. Their trails leading on rough and glare ice often show the shoeing substantial, no pains taken to avoid glare spots, apparently." (8)

"8. [Stefansson's comment, p. 453] The statement quoted from Captain Mogg that the Victoria Island people have sleds of the short Mackenzie type--about four feet long--is contrary to our observation since. We have seen no sled under eight feet, unless it be sleds made of musk-ox hide. I think the Coronation Gulf sleds average longer than Victoria Island. It is probable that in general the sleds get longer as one goes east from Bexley all the way to King William Island and Chesterfield Inlet."

2: Stefansson--252 (1908-12) 1914 Copper Eskimo
493, 117

"Sleds. Apattok's sled the other day had runners varying about 15° from vertical, like 'cutters' of 'civilized.' Curtains of skin hang on sides when traveling to keep sun off runners. Vertical section of runners: wood about 2 by 12 inches, sod about inch thick, shell of ice 1/4 inch thich [sic]. Dogs hitched eastern style with middle trace of three dogs two feet longer and others even, traces ten or twelve feet. Woman pulled ahead of team and men on both sides. Careful to keep sled in tracks of former sled, which Eskimo west never do. All sleds even guage, as I have seen over ten sleds make tracks like a single sled. Haul big loads six to eight hundred pounds."

11: Stefansson--256
116, 493, 398

(1908-1912) 1913

Copper Eskimo

"Wood is not especially scarce in Coronation Gulf; still, substitutes for wood have to be found now and then. We saw here a sled which illustrated remarkably the resourcefulness of the Eskimo in this matter. A man named Kaiariok, who is the son of Iglihsirk and of whom Hanbury speaks as being temporarily absent from his father's camp at the time when he visited it on Dismal Lake, found himself in the fall in need of a sled and with no wood out of which to make one. He then took a mush-ox skin, soaked it in water and folded it into the shape of a plank, pressed it flat and straight, and carried it outdoors where it could freeze. It froze as solid as any real plank, and then with his adze he went to work and hewed out of it a sled runner exactly as he would hew one out of a plank. On the upper edge of the runner he made notches for the crosspieces as he would had it been ordinary spruce, drilled holes for the lacings and put in wooden crosspieces, and made a sled which I had seen several times without discovering that it was in any way different from the ordinary wooden sleds."

12: Collinson--172-173 (1851-53) 1889 Copper Eskimo
116, 493, 224, 141

"On the 7th of November they [T. M: a group of natives] crossed the bay to the southward, and built their huts on that side, about three miles from the ship, mustering in all eight sledges. They visited [173] us on the 8th, and we tried to tempt them with saws and knives to part with some of their venison, but only succeeded in getting a small quantity for our dogs. They evidently had not been successful this season, and had nothing to spare. Some among the tribe were of very different features to the others, the face being oval and the nose aquiline. They numbered between forty-five and fifty all told, and had with them children of all ages."

Caribou leg skins were made into dog harnesses, snow mittens, and winter boots. The ears were used to trim the fronts of trousers at the waist line, or the backs and hoods of coats. The light skins of unborn fawns, or of fawns only a few days old, made serviceable clothes for tiny children, as well as summer caps to protect the head from mosquitoes, though for this last purpose marmot skin was often used instead. There were certain fashions in clothing. The heavy winter outer coat (*qulitaq*) was normally made from autumn skins, an adult's coat from the skins of the larger caribou, and a child's coat from yearlings and fawns. The two everyday coats, the *ilupaq* or inner coat and the *kapitaq* or outer coat, were of very short-haired summer skins; so, also, were the trousers, though for winter sealing it was advisable to have the outer pair of the thicker autumn skin. The same principle applied to the rest of the clothing and to the bedding; wherever warmth was especially requisite, autumn skins were necessary; otherwise the Eskimo preferred the light summer skins.

The spring skins of caribou were thrown away except in emergencies, because they were full of holes from the escaping larvæ of the warble-fly, and the hair was shedding to make way for the summer coat.

Other Skins. Polar-bear skins provided very useful "sleds" in spring, when the frozen mud runners of the ordinary sled melted and dropped off. There seems to be an oil in the hair of the polar-bear skin that renders it impervious to water; hence Copper Eskimo travellers commonly used a mitten or pad of bear skin to ice their sled runners. For the same reason sealers preferred a foot-pad of bear skin to one of caribou skin, which sheds its hair with dampness. The natives of Prince Albert Sound and Minto Inlet sometimes used bear skin for clothing, more especially for trousers, because caribou were less plentiful in their districts than farther south. The animal was skinned in the same way as a caribou.

So few brown bears were killed that there was no established use for their skins. Musk-ox skins, on the other hand, were much sought after for bedding, being laid under the caribou skins on top of willow matting. The northern natives sometimes made heavy coats from them.

Hares, foxes, ermines, and marmots were all skinned in the same way. A cut was made up the back of each hind leg and across to the tail, and the skin pulled off forwards. The forelegs were drawn out and severed at the ankles, and the ears were pulled out with the teeth. The tail of the fox, owing to its exceptional length, was often slit half-way down. Hare skins were used only for towels or socks, but fox skins up to at least a generation ago were sometimes made into coats. One of the dance songs popular in 1915 among the Dolphin and Union Strait Eskimo commemorated its use in this way.

The ermine was prized very highly as an ornamental appendage to the coat; consequently, the sight of one of these animals always occasioned the greatest uproar and excitement in a camp.

Of more value to the Copper Eskimo than all the other small animals was the marmot; from its skin they made coats, trousers, caps, trimmings for the tops of snow mittens and boots, and linings for the soles of caribou skin socks. From the same skin, also, they made tool bags and pouches for holding the fire apparatus. As a rule, however, marmot skin coats and trousers were confined to children, because their use by men suggested a lack of skill in caribou hunting. The natives of Victoria Island obtained their marmot skins by barter, as the animal does not extend beyond the mainland.

The Copper Eskimo killed very few wolves or wolverines until they obtained rifles and traps. We saw one man wearing a heavy coat of white wolf skins, and wolverine skins were probably put to similar use; at all events the natives readily made a sleeping bag from wolverine skins for a member of our expedition. They skinned birds in exactly the same way as small animals, except that

The lamp-trimmer mentioned several times above was in most cases merely a pencil of wood varying in length from 6 to 18 inches, generally flattened at one end and smoothed. Any small stick, whether of wood, bone, or antler, sufficed in an emergency; I have even seen a man use his knife. The stone (soapstone or asbestos) pencils, often employed in West Greenland and in Hudson Bay,[1] seem to have been unknown to the Copper Eskimo. Unknown, too, were the drip-stands of Alaska, Greenland, and other places. The Coronation Gulf soapstone is not porous as the Greenland soapstone is said to be[2]; and though oil might frequently drip over the edges, it never seeped through the vessel itself.

Every household employed torches for lighting extra lamps, for searching the corners of the hut, and particularly for conveying fire from one snow-hut to another. Occasionally a woman used the lamp-stick or even raw lamp-wick, but she always kept for the purpose four or five bunches of matted moss roots that she had collected and dried in the late summer (Figure 47b). Such a torch, dipped in the melted blubber, would burn several minutes, though if carried outside in windy weather it had to be shielded inside a bag or bucket. It was a common sight after a day's march to see the women carrying torches from one hut to another in order to relight their lamps; the first lamp, of course, was lighted with pyrites.

In summer, when the lamp was discarded, the Eskimo carefully extinguished their open-air fires with flat stones in order to reduce the burning wood to charcoal, which readily took a spark on some future occasion and could be kindled into a flame with the breath. In blowing the fire they did not purse their lips as we do, but curled the tongue along the lower palate into a half-cylinder that directed the breath along a narrow path. When carrying glowing coals from one tent or cooking place to another the women usually wrapped them in bunches of dry heather or *Dryas integrifolia;* where no coals were available they used the heather or dryas alone.

POTS

The Back River Eskimo commonly made their cooking pot from five flat slabs of limestone cemented together.[3] Among the Copper Eskimo we saw none of this type, only pots carved from solid slabs of soapstone. Theoretically these pots should have received two forms, one adapted for cooking over the blubber lamp in winter and the other for use over an open fire during the summer months. The pot for use with the blubber lamp should have been a long, oblong vessel, rather narrow, because the flame of the lamp was a long, narrow line; it should have been comparatively deep to hold large pieces of seal and caribou meat; and it might have had considerable dimensions and weight, as it was always carried on the sled during the winter and spring months. The pot for use over an open fire in summer should have been less narrow, and altogether smaller and lighter, because at that season all the household furniture had to be carried on the back.

In actual fact both types existed among the Copper Eskimo, but the longer, narrower form adapted for use over the blubber lamp was far more generally used, as winter conditions prevailed during 8 months of the year. The pot was nearly always rectangular in outline, though one saw occasional specimens of trapezoid form. The corners were sharp, almost at right angles, the sides slightly convex in outline and sloping inward towards the bottom, making the vessel widest and longest at the top; the convexity in the sides was occasionally marked. In large pots there was a tendency for the depth to vary inversely with the breadth, so that the narrower vessels were likewise the deepest.

[1] Porsild, M.: Op. cit., p. 291. Thalbitzer, W.: The Ammassalik Eskimo; Meddelelser om Grønland, vol. XXXIX, p. 533 (Copenhagen, 1914).
[2] Burket-Smith, K.: Ethnography of Egedesminde District; Meddelelser om Grønland, vol. LXVI, p. 194 (Copenhagen, 1926).
[3] Chief Factor James Anderson's Back River Journal of 1833; Can. Field-Nat., vol. LV, 3, 1941, p. 38.

hardly distinguishable from the antler knife used by the women for chopping snow; but a curving prong in which the point formed nearly an acute angle with the handle made a more efficient tool (Figure 122).

Figure 122. Curved pick of antler. IV. D.1634. 1/4.

Mattocks were seldom required except for two purposes, to secure, in the autumn, mud for plastering the runners of the sleds, and to make shallow pits where the hunter could await unseen the approaching caribou. Some families had no mattocks, but no hunter's equipment was quite complete unless he carried a short straight one in his bow-case. In fact, the usual name for a mattock was *tallulit*, i.e., a tool for making a *tallu* or hunting pit.

Snow Sounder. The main purpose of the snow sounder was to test the depth and compactness of snow with a view to the construction of a snow-hut. Hunters used it occasionally to probe the breathing holes of seals.

The implement was a straight, slender rod of antler[1] roughly 3 feet long, usually shod at the bottom with a peg of bone or musk-ox horn. The handle, of bone or musk-ox horn also, nearly always took the form of a round button drilled to fit the top of the rod (Figure 123). Figure 124, however, shows a specimen with a more elaborate handle.

FISHING EQUIPMENT

Copper Eskimo methods of fishing have been described in Reports of the Canadian Arctic Expedition, 1913-18, vol. XII, pages 152-157.

Rods, Hooks, and Lines. There were two types of fishing rods. The first was a short stick from a foot to 18 inches long, curved at one end to form a handle, and notched at both ends to wind up the line. The Eskimo often had some difficulty in securing suitable wood for this kind of rod, wood that would bend without cracking. Hence, they frequently spliced two pieces of wood together, or a stick of wood to a handle of antler; or they even made the rod entirely of antler. With dry wood, too, the notches were very liable to break,

[1] Stefansson obtained a very unusual rod of solid copper (Anthrop. Papers, Am. Mus. Nat. Hist., vol. XIV, fig. 4, p. 30 (New York, 1919)).

CHAPTER V

MISCELLANEOUS

493 *Sleds.* Copper Eskimo sleds had neither side pieces nor handles, but consisted merely of two stout runners joined by a number of crossbars. They averaged in length 14 or 15 feet, but some measured over 20 feet and others less than 4. Sleds under 10 feet in length, however, were rather uncommon; being too short to carry all the household furniture, they served for short trips only, for transporting goods to and from the caches, and, when the family was blessed (or cursed) with many possessions, for relieving the main sled of part of its load.

493 313 437 The most important parts of a sled were naturally the runners, for suitable logs seldom drifted up on the shores and the forests lay many days' travel to the south. Consequently, both single runners and the completed sleds were valuable articles of trade, current from one end of the country to the other, and natives from remote districts made long journeys to the spruce woods on Coppermine River to manufacture sleds for themselves. Under these conditions, one neither expected, nor could I find, any significant differences in size or shape between the sleds of different districts. One typical of several that I measured had the following dimensions:

	Ft.	Ins.
Length	16	1
Number of crossbars	14	
Breadth between runners	1	8
Width of runners at top		2½
Width of runners at bottom		2
Height of runners		10
Thickness of bone and mud shoeing		2

493 321 The runners of this sled had been shod with bones from a whale that drifted ashore near the eastern end of Dolphin and Union Strait; but the great majority lacked both this bone shoeing, and the shoeing of decayed driftwood that has been described by Stefansson,[1] though it escaped my own observation.

493 823 The same writer says that "In the fall, when the sled is to be used sod is cut in strips as long as convenient and about three inches thick and four inches wide. Lengthwise, along the flat side of these is cut a groove the width of the sled runner and the sod is put under the runners as shoeing. With a little water these are securely frozen to the bottom of the runners, the fuzz of the half-decayed wood holding them securely. The bottom of the runners is then rounded off with an adze or knife so the sod takes the form of a longitudinally bisected cylinder."

[114] I myself did not see this method of cutting and attaching the mud. The natives with whom I travelled on Victoria Island in the autumn of 1915 dug up their mould with mattocks, shredded it inside their snow-huts to remove the roots (which would tend to produce cracks), mixed it with water, and kneaded it into soft balls, each rather larger than a baseball, which they laid along the bottoms of the runners, kneaded together, and smoothed, first with their hands, then, after the mud had frozen, with their snow knives. A few weeks later they patched this shoeing in exactly the same way, after it had been chipped by sharp upstanding stones during their overland journey to the coast. Thenceforward it lasted throughout the winter, although every time a sled was used

[1] Anth. Papers, Am. Mus. Nat. Hist., vol. XIV, p. 78.

its owner streamed water over the mud to produce the thin coating of ice that reduced friction to a minimum.[1] By the end of April, however, it required protection from the growing warmth; the Eskimo, therefore, draped the sunward sides of their sleds with skins when in motion, and piled snow over the runners when at rest. In May even this protection failed them; gradually the mud melted and fell away.

The tops and bottoms of the runners were roughly parallel except in front, where the bottoms curved upward like a ski. Spaced about a foot apart were the flat crossbars, each lashed down at the ends with a rawhide thong that passed two or three times over the bar and a corresponding number of times through a hole in the runner below. To the front crossbar was attached also the toggle that bore the strain of the traces, a "new-moon-shaped" object of musk-ox horn, slotted in the middle and suspended between the runners by means of a belt of stout rawhide, preferably from the skin of the bearded seal (Figure 177); each end of the belt passed from the inside through a special hole in the runner below the front crossbar and then "button-holed" over the projecting end of that bar. There seemed to be no variation in the shape of this sled toggle, nor did I see any that were not made of musk-ox horn, which indicates that the animals were comparatively numerous a few years ago within the territory of the Copper Eskimo.

Figure 177. Sled toggle, of musk-ox horn. IV.D.101. Approx. 1/4.

In the late spring and early summer, when a sled was difficult to drag over the numerous patches of bare ground, the Copper Eskimo commonly substituted the skin of a seal or polar bear, which glided with much less friction over soil and stones. In the autumn, again, before recovering the sleds they had abandoned late in the spring, they sometimes fashioned runners from skins, which they held in shape with fillings of willow branches and ice, and equipped with crossbars in the usual manner. On one occasion a native even used a block of ice for a sled; he merely rounded the bottom a little and grooved the front end for the attachment of his trace.

Two Eskimo who travelled from Backs River to our station in the winter of 1915-16 dragged sleds that were longer, narrower, and with lower runners than any I saw among the Copper Eskimo, but in all other respects seemed identical. One of them had a square sail of dehaired caribou hide mounted near the front to take advantage of the favourable wind; this, of course, was not an aboriginal invention, but reflected the influence of Europeans.

Sleds rarely carried any ornamentation. We observed only two instances, both of which consisted of a simple Y pattern painted in red and black on the sides of the runners where they began to turn upward.

Harness. Like other Eskimo previous to European contact, the natives around Coronation Gulf hitched their dogs to the sled fanwise, with individual

[1] *See* Reports of the Can. Arct. Exped., vol. XII, pp. 116, 119. The Copper Eskimo never mixed blood with the water, or used blood alone, as was commonly done by their countrymen farther to the east.

29: Jenness E-5 (1914-1916) 1959
ND8 Copper Eskimo ND8

123
262 but, lacking the national taste, I slipped most of them surreptitiously to the dogs.

114 Two of the five families in this tribe crossed to
123 the islands a day earlier than the others. I accompanied the second party, which started out in the darkness of the morning. After traversing the first nine miles without difficulty we came upon rough ice that had been piled into jagged hummocks by the autumn gales, and my light sled, modelled after a European
114 pattern, upset three times before we passed through.
493 The Eskimo sleds were more stable, for their crossbars rested directly on the stout runners, and with the heavier articles, such as stone lamps and bales of meat and blubber, lying at the bottom, the centre of gravity was close to the ground. None of them overbalanced, although they were piled six feet high with the household possessions.

114
823 The nearest of the islands was Putulik, "the island pierced with a hole"; for legend stated that a large cave extended under the water from one side to the
114 other. We approached it shortly before dark, and
342 my host sent forward his twelve-year-old son to pick out a house-site. The inexperienced lad chose a spot where the snow was too shallow, but his father, sounding the depth all around with a long stick of antler, quickly found a more suitable location. While the men erected their huts, the women built low ramparts around the outer walls to increase the warmth inside

p. 42-D

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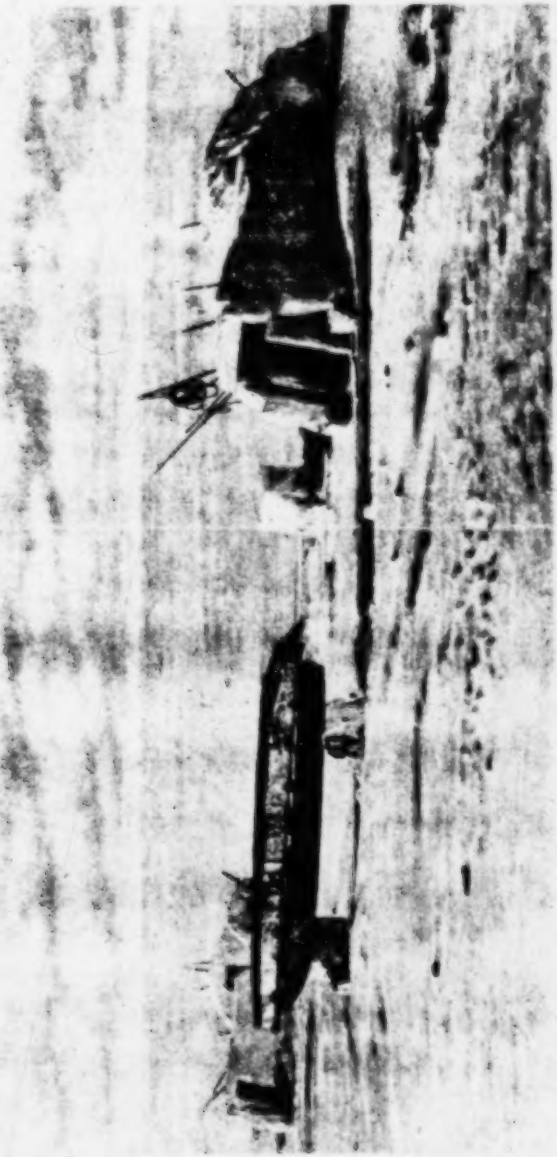

The snow-hut.

29: Jenness E-5 (1914-1916) 1959
ND8 Copper Eskimo ND8

p 42-E

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493.

They built their settlement close to the beach.

29: Jenness E-5 (1914-1916) 1959
ND8 Copper Eskimo ND8

p. 42-F

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We distributed our loads in the proportion of a hundred pounds for each dog. *Photo by F. Johnsen.*

29: Jenness' E-5 (1914-1916) 1959
ND8 Copper Eskimo ND8

Wives and daughters pulled in front of the dogs.

Photo by J. J. O'Neill.

P 42-G.
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29: Jenness E-5 (1914-1916) 1959
ND8 Copper Eskimo ND8

them with little success. On May 23 we saw the first Lapland longspur, and three days later flesh-flies, the forerunners of clouds of mosquitoes. In a pool of water at the base of a hill lay a tiny mouse, drowned by a sudden thaw before it could escape from its burrow.

The increasing brownness of the hills made me uneasy. We could discover no trace of the northern natives, though some of them had visited the Lake of Dancing the previous summer. Icehouse, who was a medicine-woman, announced that she would enquire at midnight from her guardian spirits, and our whole party gathered inside the tent to hear the oracle. The spirit of a wolf entered into her, and even thrust its upper canines out of the corners of her mouth; but it spoke in a mystic language that no one could interpret. We thronged anxiously around it, beseeching it to explain; and at last we heard this message:

> "To Big Lake come your Great Sound kinsmen.
> Travel thither with your sleds.
> Before the snow flies turn ye back again."

The oracle was obeyed. By noon our little caravan was slowly threading its way among the hills, heading north-east toward Big Lake. Ikpuck guided the course. The shoeing of frozen mud that once covered the runners of his sled had fallen away at the Lake of Dancing, and the bare wood grated harshly over the snow. My own sled, following behind, glided along

29: Jenness E-5 (1914-1916) 1959
ND8 Copper Eskimo ND8

easily on runners of steel. The Chatterbox and his family, who came next in the line, had abandoned their sled and hitched their dogs to a polar-bear skin that carried all their possessions. Last of all came Parted-Hair's sled, in the same condition as Ikpuck's. The Listener and his wife, too old to make unnecessary journeys, remained at the lake to watch over the meat and fish we had spread out on boulders to dry in the sun.

Twelve miles from the Lake of Dancing we sighted caribou and shot a large bull. We camped beside its carcass, and the women, who had failed to bring stone lamps and blubber, trusting to cook over open fires, searched the ridge-tops for fuel. But the season was less advanced on this side of the divide and vegetation scarcer, so that they found no fuel of any kind, not even the wretched dryad. I boiled a little venison for myself on the primus lamp, but the rest dined quite cheerfully on raw meat. Their tents, too, they had left behind, but they propped up two caribou robes for shelter from the breeze and spread out their sleeping-bags under the open sky. I fell asleep to the murmur of the dance-song they were practising for the meeting with the Tormiat from the Great Sound.

Big Lake, which we reached late the next evening, appeared to be circular in outline and about ten miles in diameter. We camped near its southern end, where we found old camp-sites, although the lake itself was silent and deserted.

29: Jenness E-5 (1914-1916) 1959
ND8 Copper Eskimo ND8

ing to the coast, where they had stores of blubber to feed their lamps and give light and warmth to their houses. At this moment they were preparing their sleds for the journey, restoring the shoeing of frozen mud that had dropped off during the spring. They dug out the turf from a meadow with mattocks of curving antler, thawed and crushed it inside the houses to weed out the roots, kneaded it into "cricket-balls" with water, and plastered it along the bottoms of the upturned runners. There, while it was still soft, they moulded it into shape with their hands and scraped it smooth with long-handled knives. The mud froze to the hardness of stone, giving an admirable shoeing that would last throughout the winter; but its gritty surface required a thin coat of ice to make it frictionless against the snow, and the coat had to be renewed before each day's journey. When we were travelling down to the coast over the comparatively thin ice of a lake or river, my companions sometimes poured a few buckets of water over the surface and ran their sleds through the pool before it froze; but the usual, and, in the heart of winter, the invariable method, was to fill the mouth with water and squirt a stream over each runner, rubbing it down quickly with a mitten of polar-bear fur. The Eskimos preferred polar-bear fur because a special oil in its hair prevents the adhesion of water; for the same reason our zoologist-commander, always quick to recognize the value of Arctic